

Looking towards Iowa caucus, N.H. primary as 2008 presidential election approaches

COMMENTARY BY
SCOTT STEWART
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Even with *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report* off the air for more than a month, thanks to writers' strike and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers' refusal to compromise with the Writers Guild of America, even the most passive media-consumer is aware that the 2008 presidential elections are nearly upon us.

Well, OK, they're still 328 days away, but the months of media hype are finally starting to matter as the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primaries are only a few short weeks away. Citizens of Iowa can choose to caucus on Jan. 3, and citizens of New Hampshire take to their primary polls on Jan. 8.

Why should we really care about what voters in Iowa or New Hampshire think, though? The answer is, traditionally, winning in Iowa and New Hampshire provides the first real litmus test of the candidates' viability and helps to stimulate the campaigns before Super Tuesday (this year, Feb. 5), when more than 20 states have primaries and caucuses scheduled.

In fact, this election cycle, some states have found themselves penalized for trying to move their primaries ahead of Super Tuesday in an attempt to lessen the importance of the Iowa and New Hampshire contests.

Both Michigan and Florida will be stripped of their delegates to the Democratic National Convention for scheduling their primaries on Jan. 15 and Jan. 29, respectively. The Republican National Convention will see only half the delegates from New Hampshire, Florida, South Carolina, Michigan and Wyoming because of a similar rule prohibiting nominating contests before Feb. 5.

Iowa did not receive a similar penalty from the GOP because its caucuses are non-binding. Democratic Party rules have special exception for the Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada and South Carolina nominating contests, allowing them before Super Tuesday.

With all this controversy and jockeying for which states get to go first, and which candidates subsequently get the first chance to build actual momentum, the results of the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire primaries are of unparalleled importance this year. The winners will be that much closer to the White House, and the losers that much further behind on the campaign trail.

However, winning in Iowa and New Hampshire isn't everything – there are still 48 other states up for grabs. Nebraska voters will have opportunities to make their voices heard during this year's presidential nominee selections, too.

Nebraska: Democratic Caucus

Starting this election cycle, the Nebraska Democratic Party has changed to a caucus system for choosing the state's presidential nominee. The first-ever Nebraska caucus will be held on Saturday, Feb. 9, with meetings taking place at various precincts across the state, with each precinct and county setting

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Increased digital presence gives voters more access, like it or not



CHARLEY REED
A&L EDITOR

Hundreds of thousands of people across America are friends with Hillary Clinton. Even more are friends with Barack Obama, and Mike Huckabee is trailing behind with only 15,800.

No, these "friends" aren't Washington lobbyists, they are from MySpace.com. But that's just the tip of the iceberg for the 2008 presidential candidates in the rapidly changing world of technology.

Already in 2007, CNN and YouTube.com have co-sponsored two debates, one for Democrats and one for Republicans. According to *The Los Angeles Times*, social networking site Facebook.com will be teaming up with ABC News to sponsor a debate on Jan. 5, three days

First in nation: On what makes Iowa caucuses

BY LAUREN SKIBA
THE DAILY IOWAN (U. IOWA)

IOWA CITY, Iowa (U-WIRE) – Iowans can chalk up its first-in-the-nation voting status to chance.

"It was totally an accident that Iowa ended up being first," said Cary Covington, a UI political-science associate professor. "They just wanted the state [convention] when it was warm."

Organizing Thursday's "Caucus Talk" in Burge Residence Hall, UI freshman Cianna Logie and the International Crossroads Community brought in Covington to discuss the state's coveted presidential role, its history and how to participate in the Jan. 3 event.

"Many international students have heard about Iowa caucuses but don't know what it's about," Logie said. "That goes for many Iowa residents as well."

Covington explained in depth how the Iowa caucuses started and why Iowa is still involved in the process.

"It's old-fashioned," Covington said.

He said that 80 years ago every state was involved in the technique. Only 19 states, including Iowa, still conduct caucuses, and all voters are strongly encouraged to attend.

Covington also spoke about the differences between Republican and Democrat caucusing. When an attendee walks into their designated voting facility, they are asked to declare their party.

The Democrat and Republican parties hold their

before the New Hampshire primaries.

YouTube and Facebook have been the bane of many candidates as well. In 2006, Virginia's George Allen had his re-election campaign tanked by a cell phone video where he called someone in the audience "macaca," a racial slur meaning "monkey." More recently, Rudy Giuliani was hounded by reporters about his daughter's Facebook support of Democratic candidate Barack Obama.

So what are voters to make of how technology has shaped, or will shape, the 2008 presidential campaign and election?

Associate Professor Barbara Pickering regularly teaches a course in political communication at UNO. She explained that campaigning has changed due to how easily people can access information about candidates, even when, in the case of Allen and Giuliani, it may not be positive information.

"Now you have that information about what's going on in campaigns that can be posted in places so there's not the ability for candidates to speak to one audience without that statement being expanded to other groups," she said.

However, the biggest impact technology has had on the election cycle in recent years has been fundraising, said Pickering.

"We saw that as far back as 2000 with John McCain and you're starting to see more and more campaigns focus on that as their fundraising mechanism," Pickering said.

This year, candidates like Ron Paul and McCain have kept their campaign hopes alive due to donations from millions of supporters across the Internet. In fact, newspapers like the *Washington Post* reported that, on

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caucuses on the same day, and Covington said that was for the benefit of both sides.

"It would be like Iowa State picking which Iowa quarterback would play in the game," Covington said. He added candidates were worried people would switch between political parties on the different days and vote for the weakest link.

Though he admitted the process is inconvenient, held on a cold night during winter break, being the first to caucus makes life interesting. This year, Iowans have seen more presidential-nomination hopefuls appear than any other year in the past. Even with states drawing closer to the starting date, Covington said it has not affected the importance of being the first.

Candidates stumping in Iowa was made popular by former president Jimmy Carter, who started coming to the Hawkeye State before any other of his competitors, who paid no attention to the state.

Iowa graduate student Sunday Goshit came to the meeting to see how Iowa caucusing would compare to his former voting experiences in Nigeria.

"Iowa caucusing is very different from Nigeria," he said. "We use primaries, and you must be a regular political party member before you may participate in them."

He said that his interest spawned from the idea that it takes commitment in the political process to be a part of the caucus.

"It's a very democratic system," Goshit said. "It gives a lot of opportunity to Iowans."

IOWA CAUCUS SPECIAL ISSUE

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Survey says youth voters favor Obama, Giuliani

By ELIZABETH A. JOYCE
HARVARD CRIMSON (HARVARD)

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (U-WIRE) – The Institute of Politics released the results of its 13th Biannual Youth Survey on Politics and Public Service Wednesday, revealing that presidential hopefuls Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., and former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani are the preferred candidates among the 18-24 age group.

The online survey, which sought the opinions of 2,526 U.S. citizens, also reported that 36 percent of likely Republican voters and 18 percent of likely Democratic voters said they were “dissatisfied” with the choice of candidates for their party’s nomination.

Thirty-seven percent of all polled said the poor showing on both sides of the aisle recommends the rise of a third major party. The same percentage of respondents registered “Iraq and the War” as their number one issue, while health care came in a distant second at 9 percent.

“Iraq matters and everything else is distant, that’s what the poll is saying,” said Matthew Baum, a visiting associate professor of public policy at the Kennedy School of Government.

The poll, started in 2000 by Harvard students, is led by Student Chairs Marina Fisher, class of 2009, and Matthew T. Valji, class of 2008, with the help of IOP Polling Director John Della Volpe. The poll claims a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percent and

is unique among its peers in that it is administered entirely online.

“Only 45 percent of young people total and just 33 percent of college students have a landline telephone,” Fisher said. “A lot more young people have the Internet.”

According to the survey, likely Democratic voters with a landline favored Sen. Hillary R. Clinton, D-NY, by a five-point margin, while Obama led by 13 percentage points among those without landlines. This margin casts doubt on numbers released by other national polls of the same demographic, conducted over the telephone, which show Clinton leading the pack.

The poll, however, does indicate reluctance among young voters to identify with either major party – 40 percent identified themselves as independent.

“The poll suggests that young people are more alienated by the two parties than adults,” said Professor Robert J. Blendon, who directs the Harvard Opinion Research Program.

Since the prior administration of the survey in March, the number of undecided likely Republican voters has risen.

“Usually, as you get closer to the decision, the number of undecideds shrinks. It shows how competitive the race is and how volatile people’s views are,” said Blendon, who is a professor at KSG and the School of Public Health.

Young voters

How young voters feel about the presidential candidates, according to an online poll:

Top picks

Democrats	
Barack Obama	38%
Hillary Clinton	33%
Republicans	
Rudy Giuliani	26%
John McCain	15%

College vs. non-college

There’s a gap between students and non-students among Democrats, but not GOP

	College	Non-college
Democrats		
Obama	44%	36%
Clinton	23%	37%
Republicans		
Giuliani	26%	25%
McCain	14%	15%

Committed to voting

Those who say they’ll definitely be voting

College	40%
Non-college	41%

© 2007 MCT

Source: Harvard University Institute of Politics survey of 18- to 24-year-olds, 1,237 are college students, 1,289 are not. Oct. 28-Nov. 9, 2007; online poll, no margin of error calculated

Candidates court younger crowd to garner votes

By MIKE KELLY

KANSAS STATE COLLEGE (KANSAS STATE U.)

MANHATTAN, Kan. (U-WIRE) - Young voters could play a significant role in the 2008 presidential election, and many candidates have taken notice, according to a recent survey.

Released last month by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, the survey reports that students in the millennial generation – born between 1985 and 2005 – are more engaged in their communities and feel responsible to become civically involved.

About 25 percent of eligible voters will be younger than 30 in 2008. They recognize the importance of being educated and involved citizens but discard much of the information available to them because of its polarizing and partisan nature.

“We know students want information – but from sources they trust,” CIRCLE Director Peter Levine said during a press conference. “We also know the generation of emerging adults is more engaged than Generation X and more likely to appreciate an authentic opportunity for reasonable disclosure. Our research shows there are opportunities for candidates to connect with and motivate them to vote.”

A number of emerging opportunities are now available to connect the younger generation with politics. Along with the time-tested grassroots strategies of support groups and on-campus debates, virtually every candidate has moved into the Information Age through social networking sites.

All the major candidates have accounts on Facebook.com, establishing virtual friendships around the nation. MySpace.com, which started as a way to promote local Los Angeles rock groups before developing into one of the Internet’s 10 most visited Web sites, began its venture into the political realm in March with the launch of its Impact channel.

This channel features a voter registration tool, personal profiles of the candidates and a fundraising tool that allows users to donate to candidates of their choice. The channel holds monthly presidential straw polls, and on New Year’s Day 2008, will sponsor a national virtual primary, open to all registered U.S. MySpace users.

“Every thing we do is based on what we see our users doing and what they want more of,” said Jeff Berman, senior vice president of public affairs for

MySpace. “About a year and a half ago, as we saw them getting more engaged on the issues and on behalf of candidates, we took a cue from them.”

Critics argue that since the online primary is open to all U.S. MySpace users, the younger, ineligible voters will skew the vote totals. However, according to data from a comScore Media Matrix, 87 percent of the nearly 70 million visitors to MySpace are 18 and older.

“Any candidate that thinks this is just music and video is missing the opportunity to reach a huge component of the voting population,” Berman said.

Other candidates have taken the social networking into their own hands. Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., created his own online networking site – my.barackobama.com – allowing his supporters to create profiles, add friends, add groups and join live discussion and fundraising.

Every major candidate is also using YouTube.com to broadcast free political advertisements to young voters. Others, like former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, post regularly on a blog to keep supporters updated on the day-to-day life of the campaign trail.

“That’s one of the beauties of the whole phenomenon – the opportunity to get to know a candidate in a whole different light,” said John Murphy, former e-campaign director for Sen. Sam Brownback. “It’s probably the most positive thing to happen to democracy in the last 100 years.”

Many factors have contributed to the millennial generation’s interest in civic duty. Some say the national state of affairs has contributed to the increased attention.

“The fact that we have an ongoing war and it’s been nearly five years now,” said John Fliter, associate professor in political science at Kansas State University. “A lot of these voters have grown up with the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, plus there’s a lot going on in government – scandals, corruption, whether we’re being told the truth – and I think people are a little more concerned and following politics more closely because of it.”

Though there has been exponentially more pre-election coverage and campaigning directed at the younger generation, there is no guarantee it will result in increased voter turnout.

“The potential for the youth vote impact is there,” Fliter said. “Whether or not that will play out in 2008 remains to be seen.”

State restrictions inhibit youth voter registration

By LAUREN D. KIEL
HARVARD CRIMSON (HARVARD)

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (U-WIRE) – Restrictive voter registration practices negatively affect the turnout of young voters, according to a study released this week.

The study – released by the Student Public Interest Research Groups’ New Voters Project – examined colleges in Arizona and New Mexico, states with especially restrictive voting laws, during the 2006 election cycle.

Last year, students from the National Campaign at the Institute of Politics conducted a similar study in which they analyzed voting restrictions in five states that required students to register or vote in person for their first election.

The new study by the Student PIRGs also evaluated different ways to overcome the effect of these laws.

“We had a theory that there are things you can do to mitigate it,” said David J. Rosenfeld, the study’s author and the director of the Student PIRGs’ national program.

In Arizona, those wanting to register to vote were required to provide an Arizona driver’s license number or identification card. People without one of these were required to produce a birth certificate or passport – documents the authors felt students from out of state would not typically have with them.

“It’s really blatant disenfranchisement,” said Sujatha Jahagirdar, program director for the New Voters Project.

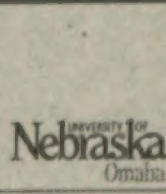
No form of identification is necessary to register to vote in Massachusetts. Any U.S. citizen aged 18 or older can register by filling out a form that can be requested online or obtained at a public library, post office or election commission office.

In New Mexico, third-party agents conducting voter registration drives were required to submit an oath saying they would follow all election laws and were only permitted to have a limited number of voter registration forms in their possession at a time.

Rosenfeld said the law was vague enough that local registrars could interpret it as they choose. In conducting their registration drives, the Student PIRGs sought to receive leniency regarding the requirements by developing relationships with registrars.

Rosenfeld said the strategy worked, citing figures placing voter turnout for students from the New Mexico campuses at 3.8 percent, a number similar to the national average for schools in unrestricted areas. However, the Student PIRGs’ efforts in Arizona to inform students about voting restrictions through

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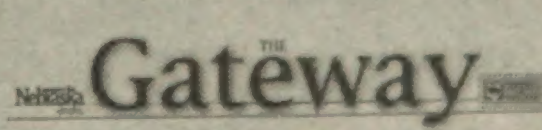
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Obama reacts to criticism for asking out-of-state students to stay to caucus

BY CLARA HOGAN
THE DAILY IOWAN (U. IOWA)

IOWA CITY, Iowa (U-WIRE) – Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., doesn't understand why he has received recent criticism for encouraging out-of-state Iowa students to come back to caucus Jan. 3, he told *The Daily Iowan* after a rally late Tuesday night.

"It just doesn't make sense to me," he said. "We're talking about Iowa students caucusing in the Iowa caucuses. As residents of Iowa, we should be encouraging them to caucus, and if they are away for the holidays, we should be encouraging to them to come back."

With less than a month until the largely anticipated Iowa caucuses, Obama spoke to hundreds about its importance in the Field House for nearly an hour. The majority of the crowd was made up of University of Iowa students.

"I need you to stand up, to stand up and deliver, to stand up and caucus for me," he told the students. "And then I promise I will stand up for you."

Obama repeatedly asked the crowd not to forget to caucus because, he said, the entire nation was looking to Iowa's decision.

With the caucus date moved to Jan. 3, many UI students will be back home for winter break. Recently, the campaigns of Sen. Hillary Rodham-Clinton, D-N.Y., and Sen. Chris Dodd, D-Conn., voiced opposition to Obama's encouraging students to return to the state for the event.

Obama told students from Iowa to caucus back home and students from out of state to find a way back.

He told the *DI* that although some may doubt the youth, he has faith that

they will turn out to caucus.

"We know there are going to be a lot of young people motivated to caucus," he said, noting their involvement in his campaign. "There are going to be people more casual, who are sort of interested but don't know much about the caucus, and it's our job to encourage them."

The general consensus among students present at the rally was an uncertainty about whether they would show up to caucus.

UI sophomore Patrick McCarthy, who is from Wisconsin, said he isn't sure if he'll caucus. He will be in Iowa on Jan. 3 but said laziness may steer him away from his precinct. McCarthy said if he did participate, he would probably vote for Obama, though he hasn't given much thought to any other candidate.

Some students in attendance had their minds made up about their chosen candidate.

UI freshman Elliot Cook, an Iowan, said he is planning to caucus for New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson.

Cook has been to numerous political events in town and has seen Obama several times. He said that although he is set on Richardson, Obama could be his second choice.

There were also dozens of high-school students in the crowd. West High student Caroline Dvorsky, 16, said even though she can't caucus, she has volunteered for Obama's campaign all year.

"He's a very good candidate for young people because he talks about the future," she said. "He talks about issues we care about, such as global warming, college costs, Social Security. Those are things we will hold the burden of fixing."

Most U. Iowa dorms to stay closed during caucus, but hotel is offered

BY NICHOLAS KELLY
THE DAILY IOWAN (U. IOWA)

IOWA CITY, Iowa (U-WIRE) – University officials say their decision not to open University of Iowa residence halls to students who wish to return to Iowa City to caucus is mostly a matter of logistics.

"At this point, we don't do it because we can't do it," said Von Stange, the director of University Housing at the UI.

The UI is offering two options for residence-hall tenants who wish to stay in Iowa City for the Jan. 3 caucuses. First, as is standard university policy, Hillcrest and Mayflower will remain open during winter break.

Additionally, for residents of halls other than Mayflower and Hillcrest, the Iowa House Hotel will offer a discounted rate to students – \$45 a night – for those who wish to caucus.

This is in contrast to the other state Board of Regents' universities; the University of Northern Iowa will have six of its residence halls open during the caucus period, and Iowa State University will rent out a floor of its Wallace Hall at \$19.50 a night to students interested in returning to caucus.

Officials say they are in a unique position among regent schools and that such options aren't viable for the UI, which has neither the staff nor the room to accommodate extra students during the break.

"Other schools have more residence

halls open during the break period, or they have vacancies where they're able to house people," said Stange. "We don't have any empty beds."

Others thought there isn't a demand for the dorms to remain open.

"So far, we haven't had a lot of interest from students," said Carolyn Kiser-Wacker, an assistant to the director of Student Services who, like Stange, felt that some of the pressure for the dorms to be open during the break came more from outside sources, such as political campaigns.

Even if the university were to open more dorms during the caucuses, many students said they wouldn't use the service because there are simply other things they'd like to do during their winter break.

"I don't usually go home on the weekends, so during break is my time to stay home," UI freshman Taylor Casey said.

Others cited travel concerns.

"I live almost four hours away, so I probably wouldn't drive back to caucus," UI freshman Lisa Greenfield said.

But some, such as UI freshman Ben Meersman, felt the lack of housing options complicates things for returning students, who must either find other lodging options or, like Meersman, make a round trip on caucus night.

"It's really an inconvenience for me," said Meersman, who plans to travel from his home in the Quad Cities to caucus in Johnson County. "But I care about the cause."

Caucuses draw slew of presidential candidates to university campuses

BY SYDNEY SMITH
IOWA STATE DAILY (IOWA STATE U.)

AMES, Iowa (U-WIRE) – Students at Iowa State University are used to seeing presidential candidates on campus.

This semester alone has seen more than 10 presidential candidates campaign in person on the ISU campus.

This isn't the case on all campuses. Iowa is unique among the states when it comes to presidential campaigning, as it is the first state in the country to hold its caucuses.

Candidates are eager to gather Iowans' votes for the caucuses because, in the past, Iowa's caucus results have tended to be mimicked in the New Hampshire primaries – and again in the following state primaries.

In the 2000 presidential race, Al Gore went on to win the New Hampshire primary, as well as many others, after he won the Iowa caucus. Similarly, George W. Bush won a large portion of the primary states after taking a lead in the Iowa caucus.

New Hampshire, as the first state to hold presidential primaries, is in a position similar to Iowa's when it comes to heavy campaigning.

Paul Barresi, associate professor and chairman of political science at Southern New Hampshire University, said his university's campus is host to a large number of candidates – in part due to their facilities, but also due in large part to the placement of New Hampshire in the primaries.

"One of the things that's true is that campaigns want to send representatives to classes to attract votes, and I would imagine that their effort is especially intense here in New Hampshire,"

Barresi said.

Although heavy campaigning can be good for presidential candidates, voters often have the omnipresent complaint of the years of campaigning.

Arthur Sanders, chairman of the department of politics and international relations at Drake University, said voters will always complain about the constant presence of politicians yet, despite the griping, there is an upside to the continuous campaigning.

"If you look at voter turnout in the Iowa caucus and compare it to that of the primaries, the turnout is much higher, as is the voter turnout in the New Hampshire primaries," Sanders said. "Voters may complain, but more participate than if there were no campaigns."

According to the United States Election Project Website, which compares voter turnout to state population, Iowa ranked eighth in the country in the 2004 presidential elections with a voter turnout of 69.98 percent; the average turnout for the country as a whole being approximately 60 percent.

Contrary to the high frequency of presidential candidate visits on Iowa and New Hampshire campuses, Alaska receives very little attention from candidates.

"The attention is good for the state," Sanders said. "A lot of other states would like to change the process so they matter more."

Gerald McBeath, political science professor at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, said the campus hosts some campaign representatives, but the state is interested in state level affairs.

"There was some interest in moving primaries up [in order to receive more candidate attention]," McBeath said. "But nothing was actually done."

CAMPUS SECURITY offers holiday safety tips

Campus Security would like to remind the campus community of some common-sense safety tips to practice during the holiday season.

- ❶ When a person leaves his or her room or office, lock it up, even if it's only for a few minutes.
- ❷ Avoid leaving valuables or packages in plain view in a vehicle. Place them in the trunk or between the seats. When possible, do so before parking.
- ❸ During the holiday break, take valuables home from campus, offices, and residence halls.
- ❹ Anyone who is going to be working on-campus late in the evening or when few people are around should consider advising Campus Security so that an officer can pay special attention to the area.
- ❺ Anyone entering a locked residence hall, apartment building or campus building should make sure the door closes completely. Strangers should not follow anyone into a secure building.
- ❻ Students who live on-campus and are leaving town for the holidays should make sure they have someone keeping an eye on their residence and leave emergency contact information.

For more information, call Campus Security at 554-2648

Iowa, N.H. primaries still up for grabs

By DAVID LIGHTMAN, WILLIAM DOUGLAS AND MATT STEARNS
McCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

MANCHESTER, N.H. (MCT) — Despite what many political experts, campaign officials and media outlets keep insisting, there's no frontrunner in either the Democratic or Republican race for the White House.

Huge numbers of voters in the early primary and caucus states of Iowa and New Hampshire remain undecided and, in many cases, unimpressed by major candidates.

"There's a lot of confusion among people right now," said Pamela Choquette, a social worker from Pittsburg, N.H. "They're undecided."

Voters are saying that, as in past years, they won't make up their minds until they cast their votes at Iowa's Jan. 3 caucuses or enter the voting booth five days later in New Hampshire.

Adding to the volatility are the rules in both states — New Hampshire lets independents vote in either the Democratic or Republican primary, and Iowa's Democratic caucus rules often prod participants to change to second or third choices.

As a result, Dennis Goldford, professor of politics at Drake University in Des Moines, summed up the mood with four terse words: "The races are fluid."

Wayne F. Lesperance, associate professor of political science at New England College in Hennicker, N.H., finds a general consensus on what will make voters finally pick a candidate.

"At the end of the day," he said, "electability will make the difference."

The discomfort and unpredictability

is evident in the numbers and in the chatter in the nation's early voting states.

David Bowen, an independent voter and thus part of a huge bloc that traditionally decides New Hampshire presidential primaries at the last minute, says he has a candidate in mind. He's always liked Arizona Republican Sen. John McCain, but he's still not ready to commit.

Bowen, a Manchester, N.H., sports memorabilia salesman, plans to go on the local television station's Web site, where visitors can match up issues that matter to them and see which candidate best fits their voting criteria.

"I haven't looked at all the candidates yet," said Bowen. "I like McCain as a Republican, but I want to finish the process and look at all the candidates."

The University of New Hampshire Survey Center has found huge numbers of people like Bowen, still trying to grasp and then finish the process. Though its Nov. 14 through Nov. 18 survey of likely voters put former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney significantly ahead of the Republican pack, it also reported that only 14 percent of likely GOP voters said they have definitely made up their minds.

It found that, while 29 percent are leaning toward a candidate, a whopping 57 percent are still undecided.

The poll saw similar trends among Democrats, as only 24 percent of that party's voters have definitely decided on a candidate, 29 percent are leaning and 47 percent are still looking.

An ABC News-Washington Post survey in Iowa taken during the same days found a similar bloc of voters still uncertain about their choice.

5,000 wanted to Rock the Caucus

By JAMES HEGGEN
IOWA STATE DAILY (IOWA STATE U.)

AMES, Iowa (U-WIRE) — In order to give young people a voice in the 2008 presidential campaign, one group has launched a campaign to get them involved in the upcoming caucus.

Kathleen Cogan, campus organizer for Iowa Public Interest Research Group, said Rock the Caucus is a statewide campaign with a goal of getting 5,000 to pledge to caucus on Jan. 3.

"It's just a big get-out-the-vote campaign," she said.

Cogan said the goal is to get students to caucus in large numbers so candidates will pay attention to issues young people care about.

"We want students to caucus so our voice will be heard," she said.

Cogan said this is the first year they have done this campaign.

"I think a lot's at stake in the upcoming election," she said.

Cogan identified global warming, the war in Iraq and college affordability as

three key issues in this election.

Alyson Peeler, junior in history, said she volunteered all three days.

"It's an opportunity to take a stance," she said.

Mario Winburn, freshman in meteorology, said Thursday was his first day and he was out in order to help young people's voice be heard.

"If we get enough people, we can show the country that we do care," he said.

Iowa PIRG is a nonpartisan group and Peeler emphasized she didn't care what party pledges belonged to.

"I'm very liberal, but we're still trying to get Republicans to caucus," she said.

The pledge drive, which wrapped up on Thursday, lasted three days and included volunteers getting students to pledge to caucus. Cogan said the three day total was 715 pledges, bringing the overall total to approximately 900.

Cogan said Iowa PIRG, which is spearheading the program, got about 20 to 25 volunteers to collect pledges. Cogan

See **VOLUNTEERS:** Page 12






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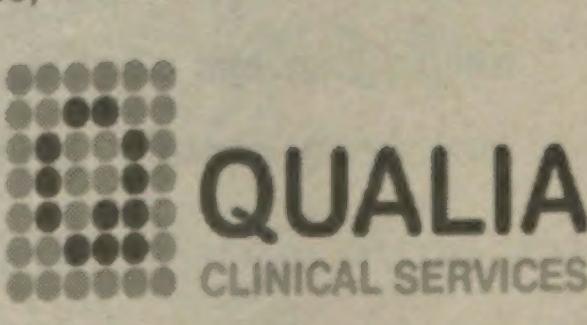
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Question of faith: Romney would 'put no doctrine' above presidential office

By JAY ROOT AND DAVID LIGHTMAN
McCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

COLLEGE STATION, Texas (MCT) — Mitt Romney vowed Thursday that his Mormon religion would never interfere with his Oval Office duties. However, after his much-anticipated speech, there was no consensus on whether he'd halted his slide in key polls or erased doubts among Republican skeptics.

The former Massachusetts governor made his stance clear in a 20-minute address at the George H.W. Bush presidential library: "I will put no doctrine of any church above the plain duties of the office and the sovereign authority of the law. ... A president must serve only the common cause of the people of the United States."

Romney's challenge was that he had to accomplish three very different goals: disarm evangelical Christian Republicans' reservations about Mormonism, especially those in first-to-vote Iowa; essentially relaunch his stalled presidential campaign; and do both while also appealing to more secular voters, whom he'll need in contests to come.

"He's put himself in a box," said Dennis Goldford, a professor of politics at Drake University in Des Moines. "He's basing his campaign on the support of people for whom religion is of tremendous importance. But a lot of those people are suspicious of his religion."

It's difficult to say whether he won over evangelical Christians, who make up an estimated 40 percent of Iowa Republican caucus voters. They'll vote Jan. 3.

"Did he win over the evangelicals? Probably not," said Terry Madonna, director of the Center for Politics and Public Affairs at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa. "But he gave it his best shot."

Romney's task was similar to what John F. Kennedy did in September 1960, when he addressed questions about his Roman Catholic faith.

Just as Kennedy said he believed in an America where "no Catholic prelate would tell the president — should he be Catholic — how to act ...," Romney told his audience, "Let me assure you that no authorities of my church, or of any other church for that matter, will ever exert influence on presidential decisions."

Romney, like Kennedy, offered not a lecture on the teachings of his faith but an affirmation of how his faith

informs his judgment and his life.

Romney's speech was cloaked in symbolism. Former President Bush introduced him and said kind words about the Romney family, though he took care to note that he wasn't endorsing Romney or any other presidential candidate. And the address was given about 100 miles from the Rice Hotel in Houston, where Kennedy famously told Baptist ministers on Sept. 12, 1960, that he'd never take orders from the Vatican.

Romney referred to Kennedy's speech in his own.

"Almost 50 years ago, another candidate from Massachusetts explained that he was an American running for president, not a Catholic running for president," Romney said. "I do not define my candidacy by my religion. A person should not be elected because of his faith nor rejected because of his faith."

But 2008 isn't 1960. Now candidates are expected to discuss their religious traditions. And the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the official name Mormons give their faith, is much smaller, newer and more controversial than Catholicism.

A Pew Research Center poll conducted in August found that 25 percent of voters are less likely to vote for a Mormon candidate, and 31 percent said Mormons weren't Christians.

Such views could hurt Romney in Iowa, where he's led almost all year after investing millions in ads and organizations. Still, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, a Baptist minister, has overtaken Romney in recent polls.

Those expecting a theology lesson on Mormonism won't find it in Romney's remarks. He did embrace his religion, which teaches that Jesus Christ visited America after his resurrection and told a modern-day prophet, Joseph Smith, to restore his true church.

"I believe in my Mormon faith and I endeavor to live by it," Romney said.

He said he believed that Jesus Christ was the "son of God and the Savior of mankind," but acknowledged differences with traditional Christian faiths.

"My church's beliefs about Christ may not all be the same as those of other faiths," he said. "Each religion has its own unique doctrines and history."

He made it clear that he'd stick by his faith and never "disavow one or another of its precepts. ... Some believe that such a confession of my faith will sink my candidacy. If they are right, so be it."

allowing people to more easily register in the state where they choose to reside.

"There should be a national requirement that students from out of state should be able to vote in the state where they go to school, if they so choose," Jahagirdar said.

Clinton defends aggressive approach towards Obama on campaign trail

By JOHN MCCORMICK
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

DES MOINES, Iowa (MCT) — Sen. Hillary Clinton defended her increasingly aggressive approach on the campaign trail Tuesday and stepped up her criticism of Sen. Barack Obama, taking him to task by pointing to an Illinois health care initiative he backed as a state lawmaker.

The heightened combativeness from the New York senator toward her leading primary rival came in an interview offered to the *Chicago Tribune* by the former first lady's campaign as she traveled in South Carolina.

The two Democratic candidates have been sparring in recent days over health care, with Clinton charging that Obama's health plan would not offer true universal coverage because he would not require all Americans to buy into a plan as she would. Obama has countered that his proposal offers guaranteed access at lower costs.

"One of the things Sen. Obama takes credit for as a state senator is a health care task force that looked into the question of how do you provide universal health care in Illinois," Clinton said. "[That report] was clear: if you want universal health care you have to have a mandate."

Although the task force did recommend a mandate, it also suggested exemptions for Illinois residents who could not buy insurance or get it from an employer. When Gov. Rod Blagojevich unveiled his health-reform proposal earlier this year, he ultimately stopped short of such a requirement.

Both Clinton and Obama have sought to gain ground on the question of a mandate, with Obama questioning how such a requirement would even be enforced.

Obama spokesman Ben LaBolt said Clinton was opposed to an individual mandate when she was pushing for health care reform in the 1990s.

"Two weeks ago, Sen. Clinton said she wouldn't attack fellow Democrats," LaBolt said. "But her poll numbers have dropped, so the Washington political textbook dictates that she attack the candidate who's on the move."

Clinton, meanwhile, pointed out that Obama's proposal does require parents to provide coverage for their children.

"So, it's not that he's against mandates and doesn't understand that there are a number of ways of implementing them," she said. "He got up to the edge of whether or not to support universal coverage and backed down because it is a more difficult goal to achieve."

Clinton also defended her increasingly aggressive approach on the campaign trail, saying her hands were forced.

"I have for months tried to stay positively on the issues, to talk about what I will do as president, to set forth my credentials and experience, the strengths that I think I bring to the position," she said. "But I have been attacked pretty regularly by my two leading opponents, and it's gone on for months. So, at some point, as we get toward the

end of these campaigns, you have to stand up and rebut what people are saying and put out the contrasts and that is what I intend to do."

Clinton said she does not consider herself an underdog, a title some news organizations have suggested in recent days, as she has turned more aggressive amid tightening polls, especially in Iowa where she is locked in a tight race with Obama and former North Carolina Sen. John Edwards.

"I never take any of those titles seriously," she said. "I don't think any of this really counts until folks start showing up at the caucuses, or turning up at the primaries. That's when it really matters."

Clinton brushed aside a statement Obama made in a broadcast interview Monday night in which he suggested she is falsely claiming too much credit for White House experience.

"I'm very proud of my record of accomplishment," she said. "If he wants to argue about our relative experience, that's a discussion that I welcome."

Comparing Clinton with his wife, Obama had told ABC's "Nightline" that he didn't think "Michelle would claim that she is the best qualified person to be a United States senator by virtue of me talking to her on occasion about the work I've done."

Asked whether she took any personal offense at the remark, Clinton said she would "let voters make that assessment."

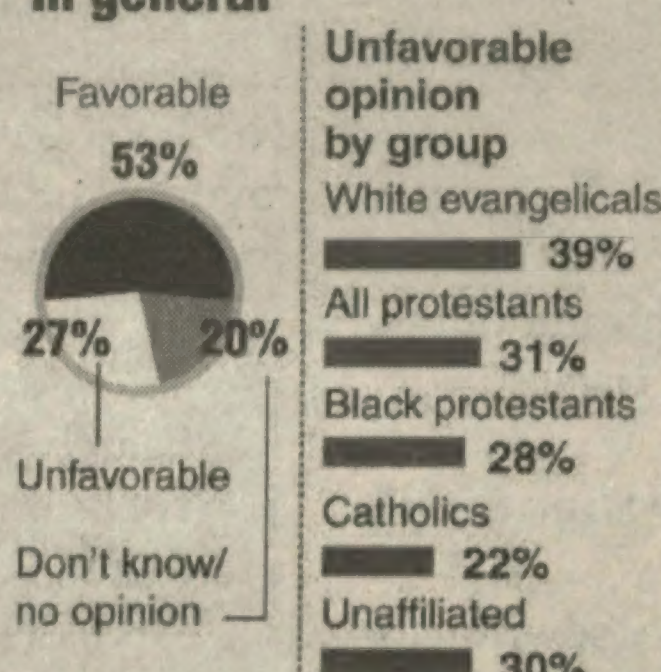
Clinton became coy when asked what she thinks her biggest liability is as a candidate.

"Well, I'm not going to tell you," she responded. "I think that we are in a competitive, exciting campaign and people are going to evaluate what each of us brings to the table, and I think I will leave it at that."

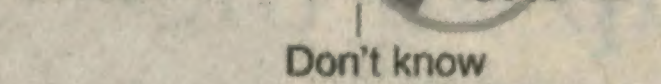
Asked if there was nothing she wished she were a little better at, she replied, chuckling: "There are a lot of things, but I think I will keep that to myself."

U.S. opinion on Mormons

In general

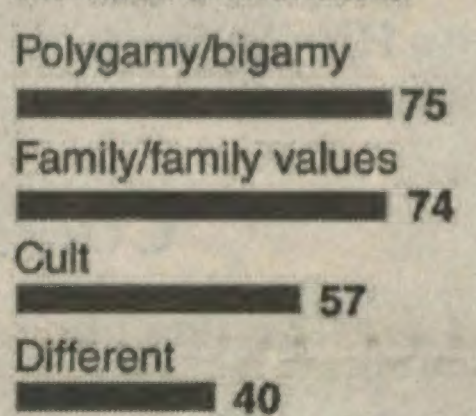


Are Mormons Christian?

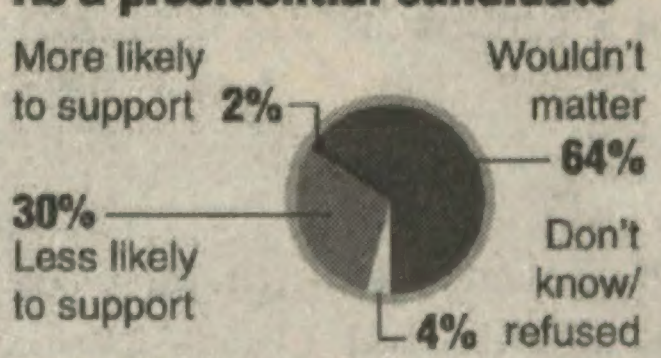


One-word impression

Number of mentions



As a presidential candidate



© 2007 MCT
Source: Pew Survey of 3,002 adults, Aug. 1-18, 2007; margin of error +/- 2 percentage points; and 1,509 adults, Feb. 7-11, 2007; margin of error +/- 3 percentage points
Graphic: Lee Hulteng, Judy Treible

From **RESTRICTIONS**: Page 2

one-on-one interaction did not generate similar success, with students only voting at a rate of 3.5 percent.

The study also included suggestions to make voting more accessible to young people, including allowing voter registration up until election day and

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Facebook, ABC to cover '08 election

By CARL JAEGER
BADGER HERALD (U. WISCONSIN)

MADISON, Wis. (U-WIRE) - ABC News and the popular social networking site Facebook.com announced a partnership in November to provide coverage of the 2008 presidential election.

According to ABC News, the partnership will include up-to-date news on each candidate's campaign trail as well as interactive forums, discussion boards and blogs.

"We thought it would be a great opportunity for us to make available to the people already having the ongoing discussion and debate on Facebook the full range of ABC News political reporting," ABC News President David Weston said in a release.

In addition to adding the U.S. News application, Facebook users will be able to "friend" ABC News reporters who will be following election events. The reporters will provide updated information on blogs, upload photographs and behind-the-scenes election footage.

"The goal is to extend the debate from being a one-hour session that happens on television to a dialogue that can take place before, after and now during the debate between voters," said Facebook Vice President of Business Development Dan Rose. "We're all about providing technology platforms to enable and facilitate information flow and dialogue."

As of Monday night, the U.S. News Facebook application had 4,591 active users. Facebook currently has more than 53 million users in 55,000 networks worldwide - and according to the site, the user demographic group that is growing the most is those over 25.

The partnership between ABC News

and Facebook comes on the heels of another partnership between CNN and YouTube.com, which jointly hosted 2008 presidential primary debates that include questions submitted electronically by the public. The Democratic CNN YouTube debate took place July 23 and the Republican debate took place on Nov. 28.

UW political science professor Donald Downs said the various forms of new media "are a reality, and it makes sense for politicians to take advantage of them."

"If you don't, your opponents will, so it's kind of like an arms race with the media," Downs said.

Downs added that through Facebook, and other forms of new media, political information is getting more pervasive, but was unsure of the medium's effectiveness.

"I think that the [information] is indeed getting out to people who wouldn't normally see it, [but] whether this means that these people will actually vote or get involved is another story," Downs said. "I personally think that if this is their first, or only exposure, then these are not the types of people who would vote, in any event. But if you do well in this context, it is free advertising, and could create a buzz among social groups."

Downs also said politicians should be careful not to "pander [to] young people" on Facebook, as it could potentially effect older generation's perceptions of the candidate.

"The benefits would be reaching a broader audience," Downs said. "The downside is that older people can look ridiculous trying to appear 'cool.' A good politician can walk this line - a bad politician will stumble."

Individuals who want to add the application can do so by searching "U.S. News" on Facebook.com.

facebook

From Facebook to YouTube, 2008 presidential election campaigning is taking on technology like never before. Where one would find TV commercials before, YouTube is being used more and more. Phone calls are a thing of the past, but Facebook groups and applications are ever growing.

The following is a list of a few electronic election resources for the 2008 election. This is not a complete list, so if you are looking for more electiony goodness, search for your favorite candidate on the Web site of your choice.

General Facebook Applications:

US Politics

By ABC News and Facebook, this application lets you follow all things politics, not just the election.

2008 Election Collection:

An application by the Washington Post that lets you choose your favorite candidate and follow them throughout the campaign on your Facebook page.

Here's My Issue: Debate & Share Election Issues

This application lets choose your top issue, explain why, debate your position on the discussion boards and see what

your friends' issues are.

Fun Facebook Application:

Fake Election

From the Fake Election home page "Forget Obama versus Clinton or Giuliani versus McCain - choose your candidate in Fake Election '08 and let your voice be heard. Optimus Prime goes up against Megatron, the LOLcats battle it out with the O RLY? Owl, and The Juggernaut throws down with Captain Picard."

Facebook Groups:

Rock the Vote

With more than 22,000 members, this group looks to encourage voting for the younger crowd.

Individual Candidates on Facebook:

Most candidates have a slew of Facebook paraphernalia. Just plug in your favorite, or least favorite, candidate into the search field.

YouTube

Search for "youtube debate" or YouTube.com to find all the YouTube presidential debates.

And, of course, find videos in support and against candidates by searching for the individual names.

Checking up on the UNO College Democrats, Republicans groups

NICOLE HIGGINBOTHAM
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

College Democrats

Within the next year, several exciting events are coming up for the College Democrats, including the Iowa caucus in January and the general elections in November.

According to their Web site, unodemocrats.com, the College Democrats are involved in a number of activities on campus. These activities include, but are not limited to, intramural sports, hosting speakers, voter registration and the assistance for local, state, and federal candidates running for office.

Along with these activities, the College Democrats had the opportunity to volunteer in Missouri, South Dakota, Nebraska and Iowa.

"We have a couple of members that are working on presidential campaigns," said Karlee Coleman, president of the College Democrats. "The UNO Democrats have held meetings where we have done caucus training, and we also invite employees from presidential campaigns to our Monday meetings."

Coleman also said the College Democrats are planning on participating in the Nebraska Democratic Caucus on Feb. 9.

Sean Girvan, a new member of the College Democrats, said that he chose to join on the notion that the group was more fun than the College Republicans. Girvan said the College Democrats are both about work and play.

Girvan also said that members have had the opportunity to work side by side with U.S. Sen. Ben Nelson and New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson. Along with their political campaign activities, they have also had Dungeons and Dragons parties as well as hayrack rides.

For more information on the College Democrats, e-mail unodemocrats@yahoo.com or come to one of their Monday meetings, which are held at the Milo Bail Student Center at 8 p.m.

College Republicans

Within the last year, the College Republicans have been hard at work.

Members of the organization have been busy preparing for the Iowa caucuses, with some members volunteering at fundraisers and other events.

"Our organization gives people the opportunity to meet candidates and come up with their own opinions," said member Andrew Northwall. "We're very involved with the local Republican party. We had Hal Daub come speak at our most recent event."

Dayton Headlee, another member of the organization, said the College Republicans have also been involved in other activities recently.

"We're bringing in speakers and supporting the troops," said Headlee. "We're really trying to rally people for the Republicans."

In the past year, the College Republicans had the opportunity to see many of the presidential candidates while they were in Council Bluffs.

"We're very close with Lee Terry," said Headlee.

This is no surprise as the organization was an immense assisted in Terry's election last November.

In the year to come it is quite likely the organization will be hard at work.

"We're going to continue voter registration, and there's a dinner for the Douglas County Republicans party right after we get back to school that we're going to," said Ian Daharsh, chairman of the College Republicans.

For more information, email join@unocr.com or visit the Web site at unocr.com.

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Maverick Voices: Who do you want to see elected president in '08?

PHOTO POLL BY
RANAE DUNCAN
CONTRIBUTOR



Steve Costello - Sophomore - Psychology
Barack Obama

"I can't really see another candidate satisfying what can or should be done."



Alex Smith - Sophomore - History
Mike Huckabee

"From what I've heard about him, he has similar ideals as me."



Josh Greigo - Senior - Psychology
Barack Obama

"He seems like the type of guy that will get things done, plus I'm a democrat!"



Crystal Ross - Freshman - Architecture
Undecided

"I have no clue. I want to vote Democrat, but I don't like any of them that are running. Obama, I saw the other day on T.V., didn't have his hand over his heart during the national anthem, and Hillary, well, everything that she touches fails."



Matt Beat - Junior - Secondary Education
Ron Paul

"He wants to get rid of the income tax and IRS and replace it with nothing. He wants the immediate withdrawal of our troops in Iraq. He will protect our privacy and preserve our liberty in every way. He is not a neo-conservative. There's dozens of other reasons, but those are the main ones."



Anna Keenan - Senior - Art Education
Barack Obama

"Any one at this point is better than Bush. ... I definitely don't want to vote for Hillary because she's full of it. Obama seems more open-minded and has many ideas that would be beneficial to our country."



Jake Tostenson - Sophomore - Undeclared
Barack Obama

"He is more interested in the middle class."



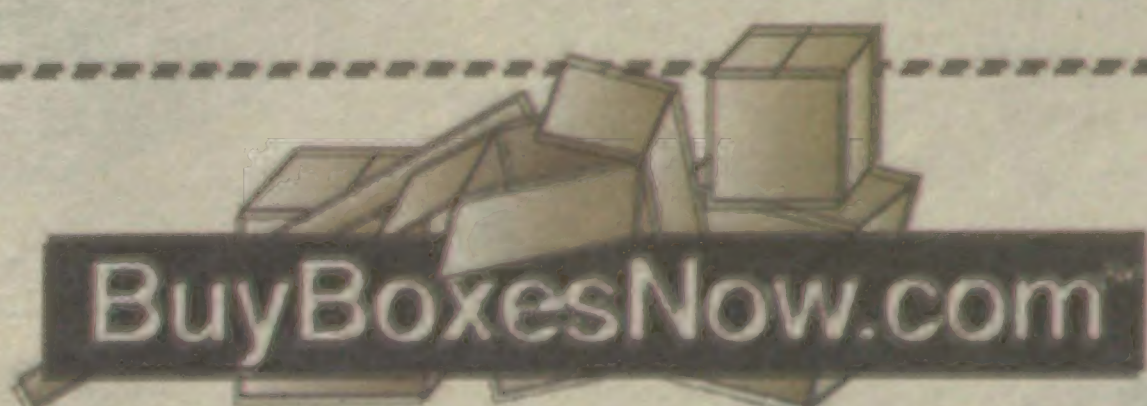
Tramone Newson - Freshman - Biology
Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton

"Either way, history is going to be made."



Ricky Tran - Freshman - Criminal Justice
Hillary Clinton

"Just to change things up. It'd be interesting to see what happens when a woman is in charge."



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Candidate Ron Paul's devotees a mixed bag for several distinct reasons

BY DAVID LIGHTMAN
McCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

WASHINGTON (MCT) — If Ron Paul's supporters got together for a family portrait, it would be one of those pictures in which no one seems to resemble anyone else.

"You have old-school Republicans, the conservatives who backed Barry Goldwater [in 1964]. You have the anti-war crowd who are principled non-interventionists," said Jim Forsythe, a former Air Force major who has organized meet-and-greet sessions in New Hampshire for the Texas congressman and Republican presidential candidate.

You also have businessmen tired of government regulation, college students who like his views on holistic medicine and middle-aged folks who don't see Social Security helping them in a few years. There are people who supported Democrat Howard Dean four years ago and others who backed conservative Republican Pat Buchanan in the 1990s.

What brings them together is a common belief that government is too big, obtrusive and unresponsive.

"It's a desire to get government out of my life. That's it," said Rick Grote, a pharmacist in Hampton, Iowa.

That bond has made Paul one of the more striking phenomena of the 2008 campaign. He's slowly climbed to poll respectability in the early voting states of Iowa and New Hampshire, and his fundraising now rivals better-known foes such as Arizona Sen. John McCain and former Tennessee Sen. Fred Thompson.

Perhaps ironically for a 72-year-old physician who ran a barely-noticed campaign for president on the Libertarian Party ticket 19 years ago, his current success is in part due to the Internet, which has brought together like-minded voters who've never met and probably never would have.

The Paul campaign counts more than 40,000 supporters on Facebook.com, nearly twice as many as Mitt Romney has, and more than 90,000 friends on MySpace, twice as many as McCain.

While the Paul army may share a belief that government needs to shrink and even disappear, its members have very different motives for joining. Among them:

The Businessman

David Fischer has run a three-person research firm in Des Moines, Iowa, since 1993. When he started his firm, he had to pay state and federal unemployment insurance and fill out lengthy forms.

Eventually, his obligation to provide payments to the state stopped, because no one at his firm was laid off, "yet I have to file reports every quarter, and I keep getting mail from the government," Fischer said.

"This is a small example of what's wrong with government. There's too much regulation," he added. "I can't even put a Ron Paul sign in my yard without making sure I've complied with all kinds of city and



Supporters of Republican presidential hopeful Ron Paul cheer on Saturday at the Freedom Center in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

county ordinances going on for hundreds of pages."

The New Graduate

Meghann Walker voted for Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry in 2004.

"I didn't educate myself. I was influenced by my friends. When you live in Chicago and you're young, you tend to be a Democrat," the 25-year-old said.

Now she's in Des Moines, helping the Paul campaign, and she finds a lot to like. She has serious questions about the USA Patriot Act, the Iraq war, immigration policy and more, and Paul seems to have a lot of answers.

"I don't want government regulating anything in my life," she said. How about border control, she's asked.

"Look at the Minutemen," she answered, citing the citizen border patrollers. "They're helping to protect and defend our country."

The Social Security Skeptic

Roger Barr, 50, is nervous that Social Security won't be much help when he retires.

Give him the money, the Newton, Iowa, Internet-technology manager said, and he could invest it. "I am able to take care of myself and my family," Barr said. "But the government instead takes it and gives me all those programs."

Until Paul, he said, candidates forgot that "I am the employer, and the government is the employee."

The Non-Interventionist
Debbie Monaghan voted for Dean, the anti-war Democrat, in the 2004 Iowa caucus.

She thought then, and thinks now, that the Iraq war is a fool's mission. And she wants the U.S. government to stop getting involved in so many foreign adventures.

"We're spending so much money trying to be peacekeepers," the Hampton employee of Cargill said. "Yet our borders are wide open. Why aren't we spending the money to protect us over here?"

The anti-interventionist theme probably echoes more loudly across Paul's campaign than most, because more than any other issue it illustrates what Paul-backers see as the most obvious evil of big government.

Forsythe, a New Hampshire aerospace engineer, spent 12 years in the Air Force, flying missions in Bosnia, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere. He was at Khobar Towers, a residential complex in Saudi Arabia, just before it was bombed in 1996. Nineteen American servicemen died.

"The people in Saudi Arabia didn't like the American military walking the streets. They didn't want us there. Their government did," Forsythe recalled.

He'd joined the military in 1990, as the Cold War was ending. He saw the need to defend the United States from the communist threat. But with that threat gone, he found, "we tended to get into conflicts for political purposes. We're not driven by well-defined goals."

Paul understands that, Forsythe said. Grote, the Hampton pharmacist, agreed.

"There's a difference between defense and just going out there and building an empire," Grote said. "Ron Paul understands that, and he has a history of voting that way."

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Still shopping for a candidate? Here are a few possible suggestions

Support Rudy Giuliani

COMMENTARY BY
AMANDA S. BOLTON
CONTRIBUTOR

We are at a pivotal moment in our history and national security is the biggest issue and responsibility facing America today as we fight the war on terror.

Rudy Giuliani is the only candidate that has the experience to truly lead America and win the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. He also understands that it's necessary to build national security measures by increasing the military and border patrol agents, who will help keep America safe.

As "America's Mayor," Giuliani has created a powerful track record of leadership, untouched experience and fiscal knowledge of what it takes to run one of the biggest and most diverse cities in the country. He knows how to reduce crime, spending and wasteful government programs.

With his quick decisions on Sept. 11, he secured NYC during one of the most devastating times in America's history. America saw many terrorist attacks against our nation's embassies, including the USS Cole and the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, well before the attacks of Sept. 11.

Giuliani recognizes that in this time of vulnerability America must stay on the offense because the threat to America's sovereignty and life as we know it is at stake. It is a fact that Giuliani knows how to lead during peace and during turmoil, which is exactly what kind of leader America needs as we face Islamic fascism on our home front and in the Middle East. Sometimes you have to fight for peace and Rudy understands that.

Coming from a military family, I understand the effects of a strong military and the effect our military is having in Iraq and Afghanistan. If our country is not secure we have nothing, all other issues won't matter at that point. That's why I choose Giuliani: He understands the extent of terrorism and knows America must stay strong in Iraq.

Giuliani also has a history of restoring fiscal discipline and accountability in the political arena.

He is a real fiscal conservative and was able to cut wasteful spending in New York City by 20 percent. Giuliani balanced the budget in New York City and turned its \$2.3 billion budget deficit into a multi-billion dollar surplus without raising taxes, which saved taxpayers over \$9 billion dollars.

Giuliani also helped taxpayers by creating jobs and taking many people off of welfare rolls. Before he took office, New York City had more than 2,000 murders per year and 11,000 crimes per week – an astonishing number. He reduced those numbers by putting more police officers on the streets and creating the "Office of Emergency Management," which then turned New York City into one of the safest large cities in America.

The question is not "Why Rudy Giuliani?" It is "Why not Rudy Giuliani?" He is the most qualified candidate of them all with a concrete track record to prove it.

Support Ron Paul

COMMENTARY BY
BOB VACANTI
CIRCULATION MANAGER

Ron Paul is a 10-term Republican Congressman and OB-GYN from Texas who runs on a platform that would make the Founding Fathers truly proud.

He believes in pulling out of Iraq, non-interventionism (not to be confused with isolationism), small government, sound economy/currency, low taxes and protecting liberty.

He calls himself the "Champion of the Constitution," which is a very bold statement, but nevertheless incredibly accurate according to the New American's semi-annual Freedom Index. Paul was the only Congressman who received a perfect score, which means he voted in strict accordance to the Constitution on every single bill set before him.

He served five years as a flight surgeon in the Air Force in the 1960s as well as on the House Banking Committee as an outspoken critic of bad government spending. He currently serves on the House Committees on Financial Services and on Foreign Affairs as well.

Until recently, there has been a media blackout regarding Ron Paul, despite his successes in the past six months.

He has won in several debate polls to date: The MSNBC debates in California, both CNN debates in New Hampshire and Florida as well as the ABC debates in Iowa, to name a few.

Also, Paul has placed No. 1 in 25 straw polls and No. 2 in seven others across the country so far. The fact that the mainstream media hardly even acknowledges his legitimacy as a candidate is mind-boggling.

As far as fundraising goes, Paul managed to raise more than \$4 million in a single day, and he has more than \$10 million on hand currently.

The media claims that his voter base is comprised of spammers and online bots, but his funds alone prove them wrong, along with the thousands of Paul groups that have taken to the streets, thanks to the efforts of his campaign.

Paul's message of freedom, no nation-building and restoring America's principles, as well as its image, has tapped into just about every American political, social and ethnic demographic possible.

Anyone who is sick and tired of being lied to by politicians constantly and voting for "the lesser of two evils" election after election is gathering under Paul's banner, although his name has yet to reach every American.

He is a man of integrity that every American should look up to, even if they don't agree with all of his views. Support the Ron Paul Revolution!

Support Barack Obama

COMMENTARY BY
KEEGAN NIEDERDEPPE
CONTRIBUTOR

A mile-wide smile and a tall, strong presence physically set Barack Obama apart from other presidential candidate front-runners.

He speaks elegantly and with a general concern for the American people and all people around the world. It doesn't take much arguing to say that Obama is filled with a sense of genuine pride for his country and sincere warmth that he continuously exudes.

Obama's first promise as president is to sign a universal healthcare plan by the end of his first term. An estimated 47 million people in the United States are living, day to day, without health insurance. Without health insurance, people across the country are falling further into debt, or, simply not getting the medical attention that they deserve in the first place.

Obama feels that too little is spent in our country on preventative healthcare. It is estimated that a mere four cents for every American dollar are spent on prevention in this country.

Part of Obama's universal healthcare plan is to increase awareness among the people in this country of major health issues such as heart disease and obesity. The more knowledge the American people have, the more they can prevent major health issues to begin with.

Another selling point of this issue is that he not only wants every American covered, but he has a plan making it mandatory for children under 25 years old to have health insurance.

Obama's step-by-step plan will save the average American \$2,500 a year in healthcare premiums.

In 2002, when the war in Iraq officially began, Obama was against it and what it stood for and believed that Saddam Hussein posed a direct threat to the United States.

According to Deborah White's "Iraq War Results and Statistics as of Nov. 25, 2007" article, the United States troops casualty rate is 3,877. Fifty-one percent of those casualties were under 25 years old.

Casualty rates aside, the war has cost this country nearly \$600 billion dollars. This breaks down to an estimated \$270 million a day on a war that Obama, and now a majority of Americans, don't even believe in.

Obama is a man with a plan. With no tiptoeing and no questions, Obama plans to remove the troops in Iraq one or two barigades at a time every month until they are gone and done fighting by the end of next year.

It is safe to argue that it is impossible to assure the American people that every person in the country will have healthcare coverage in the next few years, or that Obama will be able to completely end a war that essentially was started many years ago with no true end in sight. It is also safe to argue that no one really has the answers to the complexities this country has to face.

However, there is a certainty, though, in the fact that Barack Obama is a supreme candidate with a spark of hope that could potentially light a fire of optimism in this country, a fire that burned out with the Bush administration.

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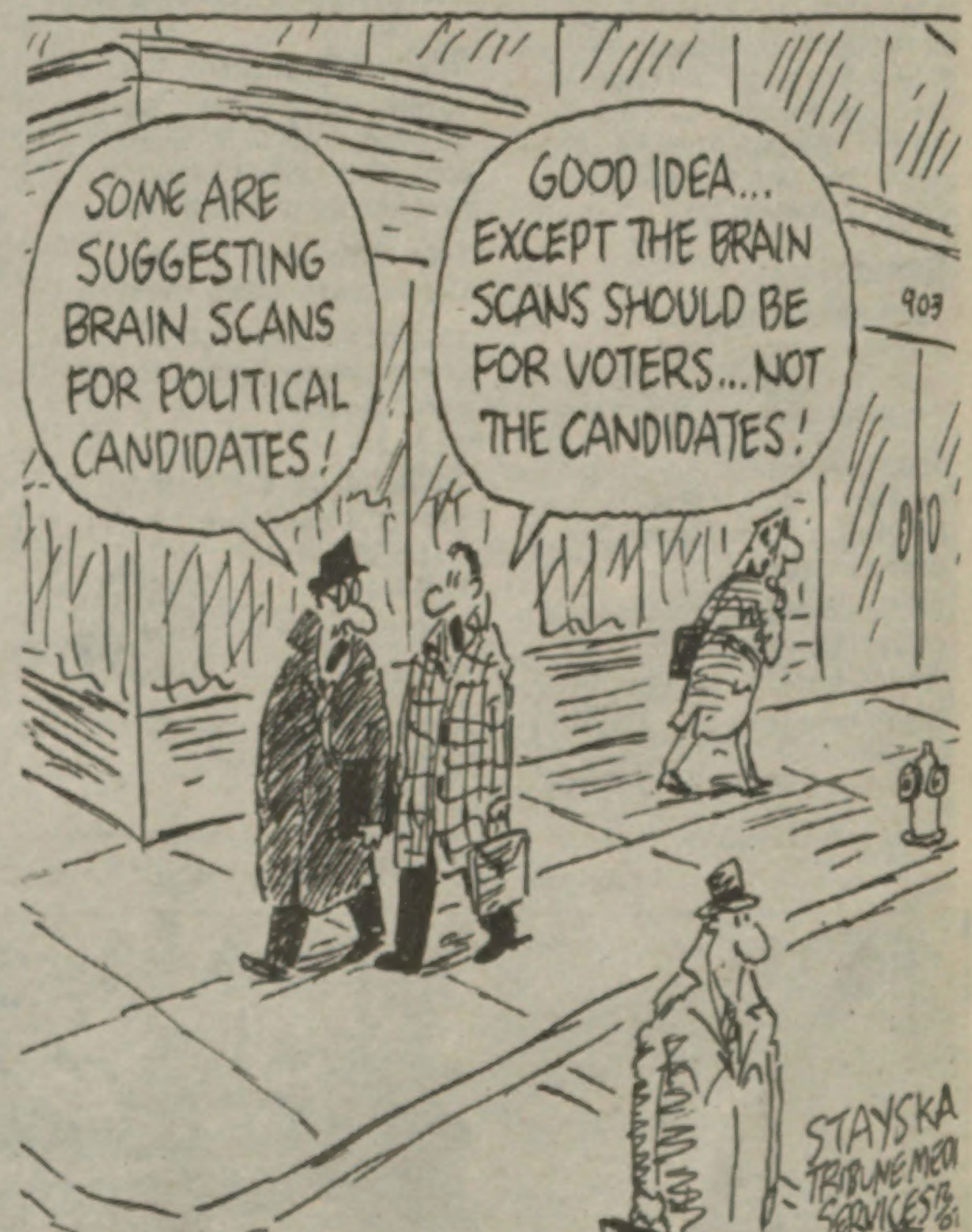
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Meet the Candidates of 2008

08

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Democratic presidential candidate

Early years

Born Oct. 26, 1947, in Chicago
Education B.A., Wellesley College, 1969; law degree, Yale Law School, 1973

Law practice

1973-74 Children's Def. Fund
1974 Staff member of U.S. House impeachment inquiry of President Richard Nixon
1975-76 Assistant professor, University of Arkansas
1976-93 Attorney, Rose Law Firm, Little Rock, Ark.

Political career

1979-81, 1983-93 First Lady of Arkansas; worked on education, children's issues
1993-2000 First Lady; worked on health care reform, children's issues; wrote best-seller "It Takes a Village," 1996
2001-present U.S. senator
2007 Announces she will run for president in 2008

© 2007 MCT
 Source: U.S. Senate, AP, MCT Photo Service
 Graphic: Pat Carr

08

Barack Obama

Democratic presidential candidate

Early years

Born Aug. 4, 1961, in Honolulu; father was a Kenyan economist, mother an anthropologist; grew up in Hawaii and Indonesia

Education B.A., Columbia University, 1983; law degree, Harvard University, 1991; first African-American president of the Harvard Law Review

Public service, legal work

1985-88 Helped Chicago churches organize job training programs for poor residents
1993-2004 Civil rights lawyer; lecturer at University of Chicago Law School

Political career

1997-2005 Illinois state senator; keynote speaker at Democratic convention in 2004
2005-present U.S. senator
2007 Announces candidacy for president in 2008

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 Source: U.S. Senate, AP, MCT Photo Service
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08

John Edwards

Democratic presidential candidate

Early years

Born 1953, in Seneca, S.C.; grew up in Robbins, N.C.

Education B.S., N.C. State University, 1974; law degree, University of N.C., 1977

Career

1978-98 Lawyer specializing in personal injury cases; won at least \$152 million for clients
1998-2004 U.S. senator; first run for public office; served one term

2004 Sought Democratic Party presidential nomination; selected as running mate by nominee John Kerry; ticket lost to President Bush

2005 Director, Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity at the University of N.C. at Chapel Hill

2006 Announces candidacy for president in 2008

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 Source: Almanac of American Politics, AP, MCT Photo Service
 Graphic: Lee Hulteng, Judy Treible

08

Dennis Kucinich

Democratic presidential candidate

Early years

Born 1946, Cleveland; family lived in 21 places by the time he was 17 years old

Education Bachelor's and master's degree from Case Western Reserve University, 1973 and 1974

Work experience

Hospital orderly, radio talk show host, lecturer, media consultant, TV reporter, copy editor at The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer and The Wall Street Journal

Political career

1970-75, 1981-82 Cleveland City Council member
1976-77 Clerk of courts for the Cleveland Municipal Court
1977-79 Cleveland mayor; elected at age 31, was youngest person to lead a major U.S. city
1994-96 Ohio state senator
1997-present U.S. Congress

© 2007 MCT
 Source: U.S. Congress, MCT Photo Service
 Graphic: Angela Smith

08

Ron Paul

Republican presidential candidate

Early years

Born 1935, in Pittsburgh

Education Bachelor's degree, Gettysburg College, 1957; medical degree, Duke University Medical Center, 1961

Military service Physician, U.S. Air Force, 1963-68

Career

1976 Elected to fill vacant seat from Texas in U.S. Congress; did not win re-election
1978-84 Representative to U.S. Congress
1984 Unsuccessful bid to be GOP candidate for U.S. Senate; returns to medical practice
1988 Libertarian Party candidate for president
1997-present Representative to U.S. Congress
2007 Announces candidacy for president in 2008
Of note Wants no overseas role for the U.S. government

© 2007 MCT
 Source: U.S. Congress, Almanac of American Politics, MCT Photo Service
 Graphic: Tim Goheen, Judy Treible

08

Republican presidential candidate

Mike Huckabee

Early years

Born 1955, Hope, Ark.

Education Attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1976-77; Bachelor's degree, Ouachita Baptist University, 1976

Career

1980-92 Pastor of Baptist churches in Pine Bluff and Texarkana, Ark.
1983-92 Founded, ran two religious TV stations
1992-96 Executive, then president, Cambridge Communications

Political career

1993-96 Lieutenant governor of Ark.
1996-2007 Governor of Ark.; first Republican since Reconstruction
2003 Lost 110 lbs. through diet, exercise after being diagnosed with diabetes; advocate of healthy living
2007 Announces candidacy for president in 2008

© 2007 MCT
 Source: Project Vote Smart, MSNBC, explorehuckabee.com
 Graphic: Angela Smith, Judy Treible

08

Republican presidential candidate

Rudy Giuliani

Early years

Born 1944, in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Education Bachelor's degree from Manhattan College, 1965; law degree from New York University, 1968

Political career

1994-2001 Republican mayor of New York City; praised for drop in crime rate, but criticized for police brutality scandals; named Time magazine Person of the Year for his handling of Sept. 11 attacks

Career

1970-1993 Joined U.S. attorney's office, 1970; appointed U.S. attorney for Southern District of N.Y., 1983

2002-present Chairman, CEO of Giuliani Partners, a management consulting firm

2005-present Partner (name only) in Bracewell and Giuliani law firm

2007 Announces candidacy for president in 2008

© 2007 MCT
 Source: Giuliani Partners, City of New York, MCT Photo Service
 Graphic: Pat Carr

08

Republican presidential candidate

Mitt Romney

Early years

Born 1947, Detroit, Mich.; father former Michigan governor, Nixon cabinet secretary, presidential candidate

Education B.A., Brigham Young University, 1971, law degree, MBA from Harvard, both in 1975

Business career

1978-84 Vice president, Bain & Company, Inc. management consulting; as CEO, 1990-91, saved firm from financial ruin

1984-98 Founded, ran Bain Capital private equity investment

1999-02 President, CEO, Olympic Winter Games, Salt Lake City, Utah

Political career

1994 GOP candidate for U.S. Senate from Mass.

2002 Elected governor of Mass.

2007 Announces candidacy for president in 2008

© 2007 MCT
 Source: Washington Post, MittRomney.com, MCT Photo Service
 Graphic: Tim Goheen, Judy Treible

08

John McCain

Republican presidential candidate

Early years

Born 1936, in Panama Canal Zone; grandfather and father were Navy admirals

Education Bachelor's degree, U.S. Naval Academy, 1958

Career

1958-81 Navy pilot, rose to rank of captain; decorations include Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart

1967-73 Prisoner of war in North Vietnam

Political career

1983-87 Two terms in U.S. House of Representatives

Since 1987 Four terms in U.S. Senate; elected in 2004 with over 77 percent of vote

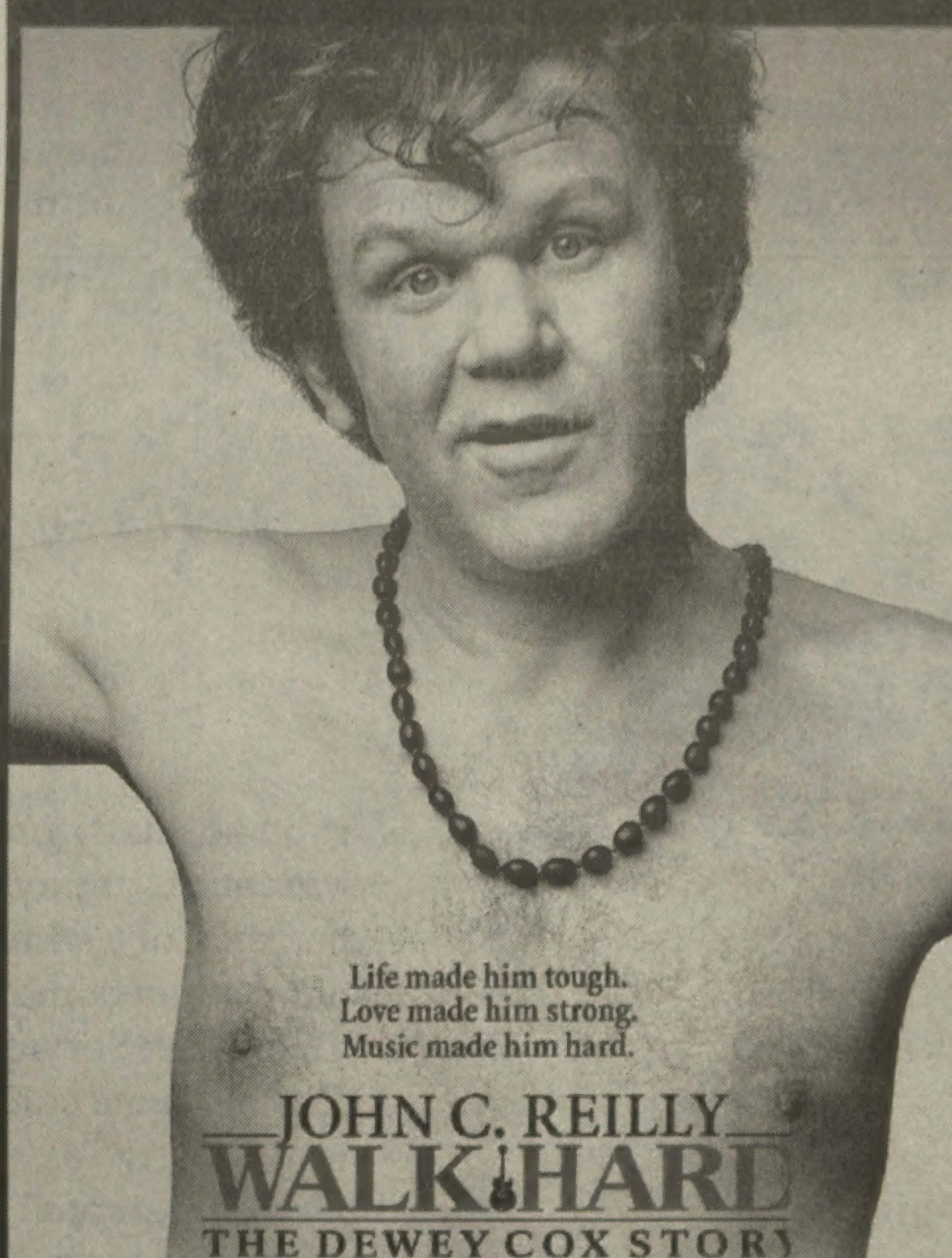
2000 Ran unsuccessfully for Republican presidential nomination

2002 Final passage of McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform law

2007 Announces he will run for president in 2008

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From **NEBRASKA**: Page 1

guidelines for the candidate selection.

Caucuses in Lancaster County, for instance, will call meetings to order at 6 p.m. on Feb. 9 and divide participants into sections based on participants support for various Democratic presidential candidates. Participants will then state the case for their candidate, and candidates that do not have 15 percent of the group will be eliminated from consideration. The precincts votes will then be divided among these candidates, based on the strength of support for each.

The caucus system will be binding for the Nebraska Democratic Party, meaning that the votes for the delegation to the Democratic National Convention, held from Aug. 25 to Aug. 28 in Denver, must follow the results of the Feb. 9 caucuses.

However, this also means that the results of the May 13 primaries will not have any effect on the selection of delegates to the Democratic National Convention.

Nebraska: Republican Primary

The Nebraska Republican Party will be following the system it has followed in recent elections, conducting an advisory primary during the Nebraska state primary on May 13. Results of that contest, though, are not binding but only taken into consideration during the Nebraska State Republican Convention.

That convention is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, July 12, but may be held at a later date. At the convention, 21 out of 33 delegates for the Republican National Convention are selected. Nine of the delegates are selected by caucuses in the congressional districts, and three are sent as unpledged delegates by virtue of their position, according to thegreenpapers.com.

Primary, General Elections

The statewide primary election will be conducted on Tuesday, May 13, in Nebraska. Included with the primary are the nonbinding presidential nominee contests for the Democratic Party (for registered Democrats) and the advisory contest for the Republican Party (for registered Republicans). Independents can still vote for non-partisan issues and in the general election.

The general selection is scheduled for Nov. 4, 2008, and will include both the race for president as well as the race for Chuck Hagel's recently vacated seat in the U.S. Senate.

Mail-in voter registrations must be postmarked by the third Friday preceding the election, and individuals may register in person at the county clerk or election commissioner's office up until 6 p.m. on the second Friday before the election.

For more information, visit the Nebraska Secretary of State's Web page, www.sos.ne.gov/dyindex.html.

From **TECHNOLOGY**: Page 1

Nov. 5, Ron Paul raised \$4.2 million in a one-day "money bomb," a fundraising record, despite consistently being below 10 percent in the national polls.

Online support for candidates like Paul and McCain has reinvigorated the concept of grassroots campaigning. Even in Omaha, candidates like Jim Esch, who challenged incumbent representative Lee Terry in 2006, raised much of his support through his Web site and campaign updates via Facebook.

This election cycle, Facebook has added the "Election '08" application, which allows thousands of Facebook's users to proudly display their support for a candidate as well as get informational updates when their candidates are mentioned in the news.

According to the social networking site, 268,694 votes have been cast for candidates with Democrat Barack Obama leading the pack with 68,054 votes, or 24 percent.

Alex Rahe, a junior at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, is one of Obama's Facebook supporters.

"I added [the application] after several of my friends added the application," he wrote in a message to the *Gateway*. "It was a simple way for all of us to show who and what we are supporting for the upcoming election without having to waste a lot of time asking unnecessary questions."

In a story titled "Will the 2008 USA election be won on Facebook," CNN said that many candidates have "gotten wise" to the impact the sites have to raise

awareness with young voters. However, Pickering isn't sure how well that has translated to the general election.

"Historically the age bracket of about 18 to 24 is a group that doesn't vote," she said. "I think that's obviously the hope, that it will have an impact on increased voter turnout ... at this point we don't know if that will happen in 2008."

However, the biggest impact on this year's election from all this newly available access to candidates could be that candidates will become even less

indistinguishable from each other. Candidates these days are never "off the record," and so they will likely stick to their talking points since any major gaffs could be very costly.

Pickering explained that the rise in political blogging has played a major role in how candidates are handled by

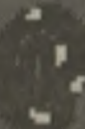
their campaign managers.

"There are several groups now that are out there monitoring both public statements candidates are making, as well as advertising to kind of fact check," she said. "The danger is making sure that there's verification of accuracy of information when things get reported."

For the 2008 election, the bottom line seems to be that if you want information or to express your support for a candidate, there's never been an easier time to do it.

But, with the election cycle starting earlier and earlier, it remains to be seen if, when it's time to finally cast their ballots, voters have been turned off or will still be tuning in.



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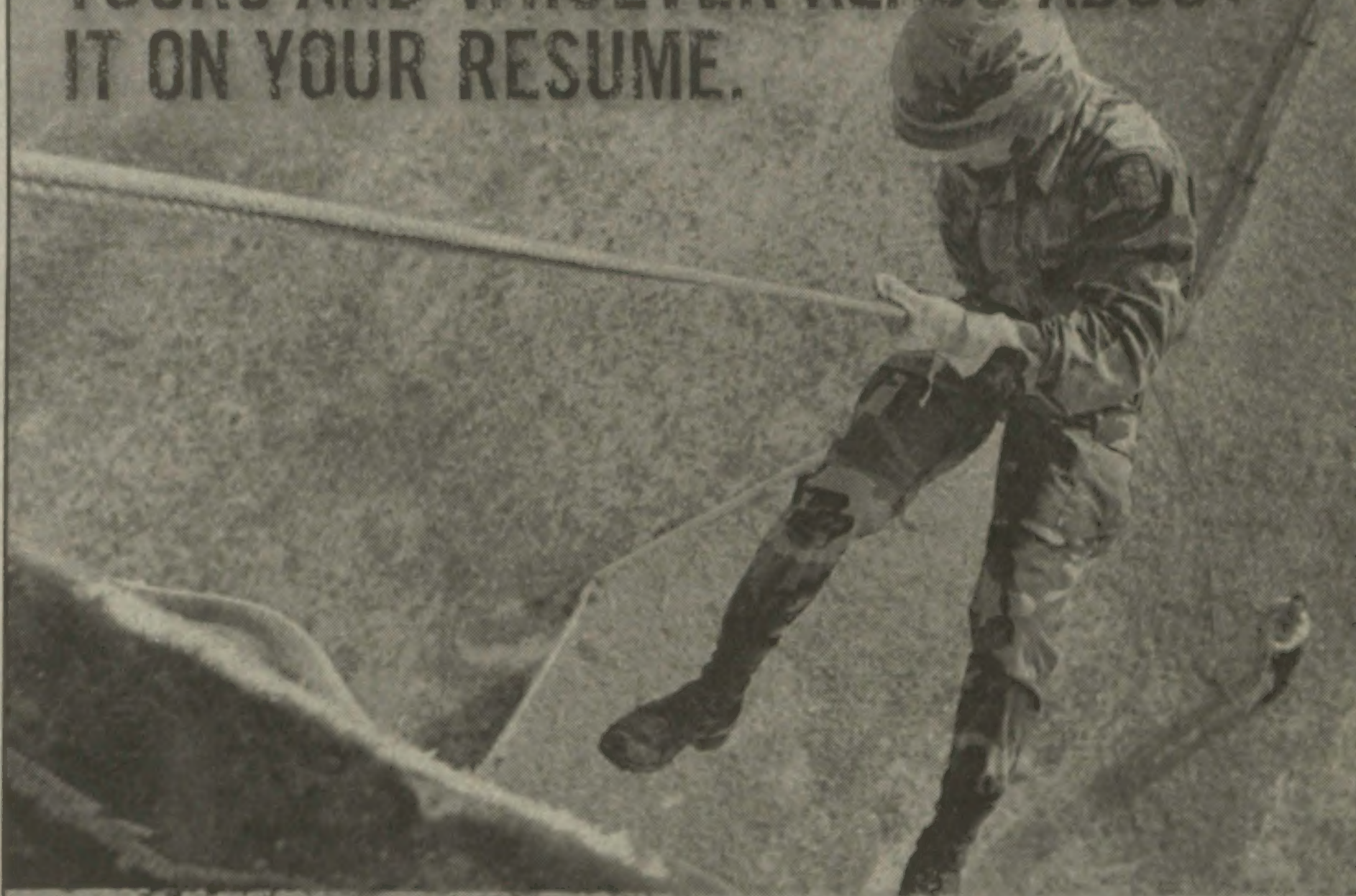
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Poll reveals differences in priorities between parties before primaries

By STEVEN THOMMA
McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON (MCT) — Democrats and Republicans in Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina have dramatically different views of the nation's priorities, according to a new McClatchy-MSNBC poll. The fact that the two parties' bases don't even agree on which issues matter most may help to explain why the people they send to Washington have such a hard time agreeing on anything.

While pollsters didn't offer each side all the same choices, Democrats and Republicans in all three states differed widely when asked about the same issues. Voters were asked to identify which issue they felt was the most important.

Some of the disparities:

National security or terrorism

In Iowa, it's last on the Democrats' list, cited by just 1 percent, and first on the Republican list, mentioned by 31 percent. In New Hampshire, it's the top priority for 2 percent of Democrats and 25 percent of Republicans. In South Carolina, it's tops for 6 percent of Democrats but 25 percent of Republicans.

Iraq

In Iowa, 24 percent of Democrats call it the biggest issue facing the country, but only 7 percent of Republicans do. In New Hampshire, it's number one for 35 percent of Democrats and 7 percent of Republicans. In South Carolina, it's the first priority for 19 percent of Democrats and 6 percent of Republicans.

McClatchy-MSNBC Poll

The candidates' first tests

The Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire and South Carolina primaries are some of the most watched contests. The latest polling:

Who you'd vote for if primary/caucuses were held today	IOWA	N.H.	S.C.
DEMOCRATS			
Joe Biden	5%	3%	2%
Mitt Romney	27%	30%	28%
Chris Dodd	1%	1%	1%
John Edwards	24%	10%	19%
Dennis Kucinich	1%	3%	1%
Barack Obama	25%	27%	25%
Bill Richardson	9%	7%	1%
Undecided	11%	19%	24%
REPUBLICANS			
Rudy Giuliani	5%	17%	17%
Mike Huckabee	22%	11%	20%
Duncan Hunter	1%	1%	0%
John McCain	7%	16%	19%
Ron Paul	2%	9%	4%
Mitt Romney	26%	25%	15%
Tom Tancrede	2%	1%	1%
Fred Thompson	11%	6%	14%
Undecided	10%	17%	19%

For S.C.: Candidate's most important qualities

1. Is honest and trustworthy	Dem.
2. Cares about the issues I care about	24%
3. Represents change and a new approach	26%
4. Shares my values and views on the issues	19%
5. Has strength, leadership to keep America safe	60%
6. Has the right experience	40%

Most important issues

1. Health care	Dem.
2. The economy and jobs	29%
3. Iraq	24%
4. National security or terrorism	19%
5. Moral and family issues	60%
6. Immigration	25%

Source: McClatchy-MSNBC poll by Mason-Dixon Polling and Research, a division of 500 Party Democrats and 500 Republicans. The poll was conducted Dec. 10-11, 2007. The poll was conducted among 1,000 voters, 500 Democrats and 500 Republicans. The poll was conducted among 1,000 voters, 500 Democrats and 500 Republicans. The poll was conducted among 1,000 voters, 500 Democrats and 500 Republicans.

The economy, jobs

In Iowa, 28 percent of Democrats but just 8 percent of Republicans call it the top issue. In New Hampshire, it's the top priority for 18 percent of Democrats, but also for 17 percent of Republicans. In South Carolina, it's the top issue for 24 percent of Democrats and 15 percent of Republicans.

From **VOLUNTEERS**: Page 4

said students can also pledge online and join the group on Facebook.

Although the group is done with its pledge drive, volunteers will be independently recruiting pledges until the day of the caucus, she said.

Overall, Cogan said the response has been good, although there have been some challenges. She said this year's early caucus date, which falls during break, was a challenge the group has been dealing with.

"I think we knew early on that that was going to be an obstacle," she said.

Cogan said many students did not know the university was opening dorms for those wanting to caucus.

Peeler said she encountered some students who didn't know about the caucus.

"I've tried to take the time to explain it," she said.

Peeler said it was important for students to caucus, especially with Iowa having the first-in-the-nation caucuses.

"There's such a power in our hands," she said. "That's something that we should appreciate and not take for granted."

Peeler also talked about the Jan. 3 caucus date. "I think it helps the dorms are going to be open," she said. "It's a challenge we're trying to overcome."

Winburn agreed that the caucus is poorly timed but still encouraged young people to get out and caucus.

"This is our chance to prove the country wrong," she said.

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from the Gateway

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



photo by Michele Moore
Pictured left to right, back row: Taylor Muller, Michelle Bishop, Patrick Doty, Andrea Barbe, Charley Reed, Jason Sibson, Jillian Whitney and Rebecca Whitney. Front row, left to right: Ashlee Schuette, Pam Bouterse, Matt Volkman, Cassy Loseke, Scott Stewart, Bre Gehreken, Zach Maharaj and Bill Wendl.

FROM THE GATEWAY



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hope in the New Year"*

Chancellor John Christensen

